

011768 248
PEEPING TOM,

OF

COVENTRY.

A COMIC OPERA.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, SMOCK-ALLEY,

By JOHN O'KEEFE, Esq;

PRINTED IN THE YEAR, 1786.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Tom,	—	—	Mr. <i>Ryder,</i>
Mayor,	—	—	Mr. <i>O'Reilly,</i>
Harold,	—	—	Mr. <i>Wood,</i>
Crazy,	—	—	Mr. <i>Baker,</i>
Earl,	—	—	Mr. <i>Swindal,</i>
Count,	—	—	Mr. <i>M'Cready.</i>

W O M E N.

Maud,	—	—	Mrs. <i>Hitchcock,</i>
Emma,	—	—	Miss <i>Romanzini,</i>
<i>&c.</i>	—	—	Mrs. <i>Hannam.</i>



PEEPING TOM.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

A View of Coventry.

Enter Count Lewis, Emma, and Attendants.

Emma.

I CAN scarce believe I am safe, but where's that young peasant that rescued me?

Lewis. That young fellow behaved very well, he did indeed, my beloved Emma; but you are safe now, I give you joy.

Emma. Give me joy! no, that you never shall;—

Lewis. Now you are angry, but when we are married——

Emma. You and I married! that we never shall.

Lewis. Oh! that will be fine indeed, to be forced from Normandy: your father the Earl of Mercia, says, You, Count Lewis, shall wed my daughter Emma—But the enemy of all sport, a wicked Dane, darted like a ravenous falcon on you, my pretty little love, and be-
cause

cause I would not fight, you will not marry me—now if I did, I might be killed, and would not be married.

Emma. To run away, and not even draw your sword.

Lewis. It is ill manners to draw—in the presence of the ladies.

Emma. To be sure, you're a gallant champion for the ladies!

Lewis. I love the ladies, and love myself,—for the ladies sake—besides, the Danes are a barbarous enemy, and I made a vow never to encounter a Dane.

Emma. Here comes my benefactor and deliverer.

Enter Harold.

Harold. Madam, I've chastised the villains that have dared to insult you, but hope you've received no hurt!

Emma. Thanks to your kindness—but what is your name?

Har. William, Madam.—

Emma. William—while I am here in Coventry, this token will remind you who it is you have oblig'd. *[Gives a ring.]*

Lewis. And young man, if you were a little more polished, I would prefer you to be 'Squire to my lady wife here.

Emma. Your wife! never. *[Exit Har.]*

Lewis. Never! Oh, I will go and tell your father—Oh! I—— *[Exit.]*

Emma. No, nothing shall ever unite me to a creature so contemptible. SONG.

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S O N G.

Glitt'ring trisler, sport of fashion,
Gaudy insect ever ranging;
For some other feign a passion,
Free me in thy fancy changing.

Love ne'er blooms where men are wanting,
Then how vain tyrannic power!
Is the soil unkind for planting?
Who can raise the blooming flower?

Self-enamour'd swain all sighing,
Gazing tender admiration;
In our eyes their image eying,
There they pay their adoration.

True-love, I will not believe you,
While you love yourself so dearly;
If I hate, I don't deceive you,
Yet I fear I love sincerely.

[Exit Emma and Attendants.]

S C E N E, *the Street.*

Enter Harold.

Har. Charming Emma! when she knows me
to be Harold, the son of Earl Goodwin, her
father's professed enemy, my blooming hopes
are blasted in the birth.

Enter Tom and Mob.

Tom. Is any body here? Joy! joy! huzza!

Har. For what?

Tom. Because Earl Goodwin and his sons are
banished.

Har. My father, myself, and my brother,
banished!—

[*Aside.*

Tom.

Tom. Huzza! Bishop Dunstan has commanded King Edward, to command the Earl, to command the Mayor, to command me, to make proclamation at the cross, that the Earl Goodwin and his sons, are traitors in the land.—And I am now going to do the job—come along, good folks, God bless the King, and the crier, Knights, yeomen, young and old men, women and children—O yes! O yes!

[*Exit Tom and Mob.*]

Har. Shall I venture into the town? if once Emma returns to her father's castle, probably I shall never see her again; she is lodged here in the Mayor's house: if I am known to be Harold, it is instant death, but life without my Emma, is not worth my care.

S C E N E, a Chamber.

Enter Mayor and Maud.

Maud. Nay, now, don't, I told your worship—you know, don't you believe any such thing—Lord, what will the folks say, to see his honour, the Mayor of Coventry, make so free with Tom the Taylor's wife!

Mayor. Let me hear them talk, and I'll set them in the stocks——Zounds, dare they censure a Magistrate—Let me see them wink, and there's the ducking-stool—for a nod, the cage—for an inuendo, the pillory—and for a malicious whisper, five hundred twirls in the whirlingig.

Maud.

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Maud. You know, your worship, I was virtuous—you know I was forced to leave madam, your wife's service, because I would not let you—you know I would not be naught with you, and sooner than do so—I was forced to take up with Tom, who, tho' but a Taylor, was honest!

Mayor. Ay, Tom's a rogue!

Maud. A rogue! and like your worship!—why he's a bit of a Magistrate—was not he a parish clerk, beadle and sexton, at one time, and is he not now overseer and church-warden?

Mayor. Ay, but who made him all this?—was he no better than a clown, till I took him under my wing?

Maud. He's certainly a little beholden to your worship.

Mayor. Ah! he owes it all to your pretty face, Maud—it was all for your sake, in your beauty—for you have provisions of all sorts—why you have got a beadle in that arched dimple—a constable's staff in that pretty mole—an overseer in that hazle eye—a church-warden in those auburn locks—and a pair of plump Aldermen in that panting bosom——

Maud. Oh, lord, I did not think I was such a great body!

Mayor. Yes, you are, indeed you are—talk of Godiva, the Earl's new-married lady, and his daughter Emma—why I will wager that smile, against the whole kingdom of Mercia—egad, if those stars were to twinkle in the court of Glo'ster, King Edward would soon forget his vow of chastity.

S O N G.

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S O N G.

*Mayor.**Maud.*

The deuce a one but you, pretty Maud,
 I love, indeed 'tis true, pretty Maud;
 One kiss, nay, prithee hush—

Md. I vow you make me blush;

May. Like a rose-bud in a bush, pretty Maud.

Md. Do, let me go away, Mr. Mayor,
 What will the people say, Mr. Mayor?

May. Let them prattle as they will,
 Of love I'll have my fill,
 Like a dove I'll cop and bill;

Md. You shall not coo and bill, Mr. Mayor.

May. Pretty Maud, pretty Maud,
 By all that's great and grand, pretty Maud;
 Golden chain and lily wand, pretty Maud:

Md. 'Tis all of little use,
 Chain and wand I must refuse
 For the needle, thimble, goose,
 Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor.

Maud. I tell you what, now, Mr. Mayor,
 you shall not talk to me in that way any more,
 that's what you shall not.

Mayor. But I will—I will tell you what—
 I will call on you by and by—do not be out—
 I know Tom will be ringing his bells.

Maud. Lord, your honour, if your lady
 should know!

Mayor. My lady! poh, poh! she's at home,
 God bless her, let her stay there.

Maud. Ay, but then the neighbours—

Mayor. Neighbours!—the pillory—the
 stocks—the whirligig—I'll tell you, Maud,
 I'll send you a present of some French wine,
 that

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that I had from Count Lewis, and egad, we'll be so snug and so comfortable—you go home, and I'll be with you by and by.

Tom. [*listening*] My wife will be a Mayor soon, and I shall be an Alderman.

[*Maud exit.*] *Enter Tom.*

Mayor. I'll send you the wine, and there's something to buy a bit of dinner. [*Gives Tom money.*]

Tom. I am obliged to your worship.

Mayor. [*Surprized at seeing Tom instead of Maud*] Tom! ay, ay, how do you do, Tom; how do you do; how do you do?

Tom. Pretty well, I thank your worship—but, Sir, is this for a corporation dinner?

Mayor. No, no. [*What the devil brings this fellow here? Aside*] Pray, have you not a ringing to-day, at the Guy of Warwick, Tom?

Tom. Oh, yes; we jingle a peal of tripple-bobs, for a leg of mutton and trimmings.

Mayor. [*Egad, that's very lucky, I shall have Maud all to myself.*] 'Tom, you are a good ringer.

Tom. Pretty well, Sir.

Mayor. Yes, you are, Tom, you are; you will certainly win. Mind your bells, Tom—do not neglect going, you'll certainly win, Tom.—But what brought you to me now, Tom?

Tom. Tho' merry I be, I never was so treated in my whole life: why, you know our old mad Crazy, the beadle, I thought he might make some blunder in proclaiming the proclamation of
Earl

Earl Goodwin and his sons, as traitors, so I took the bell and rung the people all about me, and there I stood like a hen and chickens; but I no sooner cried 'O Yes, O Yes,' than I heard a voice like a gander in the marshes, screaming out 'O No, O No,' and who should this be but old Crazy; for I having got the city bell, he hobbled with the 'pothecary's pestle and mortar, and clattered with such a devil of a noise, folks could not hear, and because I told him to be quiet, he flew at me and tripped up the leg of old corporal Standfast, tumbled over Kit the tinker, overturned father Fogarty, the fat friar, and has mauled my nose in this manner—look—he fit for an office, indeed, an old driveller.

Mayor. Why, you most impudent of all rascals, who am I?

Tom. Why, Sir, you are the Mayor of Coventry.

Mayor. And did not I appoint him beadle?

Tom. Why, lord, he's so infirm, that when he stands at church door with the poor's box, his hand shakes so, that the gentle-folks charity farthings fall out of the box—why, he has not one of his twelve senses left but his scratching.

Mayor. Sirrah, he has all his talents about him—he's been a devilish shrewd fellow.

Tom. Yes, he's a man of sharp talons, as my nose can testify.

Mayor. Oh! here he comes.

Enter Crazy.

Crazy. You a Mayor——there's a fig for your crown and sceptre.

Tom.

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Tom. There, your worship, the fellow has made a King of you.

Crazy. Tell me of Kings—I that have seen Edward the martyr—the glorious Alfred, and Canute the great!

Tom. Yes; but did Canute the great give you authority to scratch my nose?

Crazy. I will Canute you—I that have been beadle here ever since the days of Edmund Ironside.

Mayor. Ay, and a devilish clever fellow he was.

Crazy. What do you mean?

Tom. I mean that you are curfedly shabby about the noddle—you have lived a great while.

Mayor. Come, be quiet, Tom—here I command you to read the proclamation—now, shew him that you can proclaim it right;—mind, in King Edward's name, you are to offer a reward of five hundred marks, to any man that will bring in Goodwin, Earl of Warwick, dead or alive.

Crazy. Yes, I will—This is to give notice, that by command of Earl Goodwin, King Edward shall have five hundred marks for bringing in the head of the Mayor of Coventry, dead or alive.

Tom. That sensible fellow has made a pretty proclamation!

Crazy. Now, ain't I an old chaunter?

Mayor. Yes—I'll trust you with the public affairs, but you shall have nothing to do with mine.

Tom.

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Tom. So—between the Magistrate and his deputy, the affairs of the public are likely to fare well—he has not sense enough to help you in your love affairs with the girls, as he used to do.

Mayor. I'll try him: [*aside*] Can't you contrive to keep Tom from going home?

Crazy. What! you are going to Maud?—well, I will, I will.

Mayor. Mind your bells, Tom—Tom—mind your bells.

Tom. I will:

S O N G.

Tom. Merry are the bells,

And merry do they ring;

Crazy. Merry was my self,—

And merry could I sing.

C H O R U S.

Merry is your ding-dong, happy, gay and free,
Merry with a sing-song, merry let us be.

Mayor. Waddle goes your gait,

Tom. Hollow are your hose;

Mayor. Noddle goes your pate,

Tom. And purple is your nose.

C H O R U S.

Merry is your ding-dong, happy, gay and free,
And with a merry sing-song, merry let us be.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Tom's House.*

Enter Maud.

Maud. There never was a young woman so beset as I am by his worship—if I tell Tom, there's a quarrel—and then there's no staying for

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for us in Coventry, the Mayor has such a power of interest—I've a great mind to tell madam, his lady, now I will be quit with him one way or other, for his bad opinion of me, that I will; when people get up a little in the world—Lord, they think there's nothing but to use poor folks as they please—hang the town—how is Tom altered since I came into it!

S O N G.

Maud.

What pleasure to think of the times we have seen,
'Twas May-day I first saw my Tom on the green;
So neat was I drest, and so sprightly a mien,
A King was my love, and I was his Queen.—
The garland presented by Tommy,
From the hands of my Tommy.

A side-look I stole at my lover by chance,
Which straight he return'd with so tender a glance;
My heart leapt with joy when I saw him advance,
And well did I guess 'twas to lead off the dance.
For none danc'd so neat as my Tommy,
In all things compleat was my Tommy.

Oh! here comes the wicked Mayor.

Enter Mayor, two Countrymen and Hamper.

Mayor. Now, here, bring the hamper this way, bring it along—make haste—there now, get along with you. [*drives the two men out.*]

Maud. What shall I do!

Mayor. Come along—come—there get along—now to bolt the door. [*fastens the door.*]

Maud. I'm undone, no creature in the house but myself—he must not know that, or he may be unmodest indeed. [*aside*]

B

Mayor,

Mayor. Egad, here I am, Maud, and Tom is abroad with the ringers, practising his bells—here am I—but you little rogue, how nicely you gave me the slip just now?

Maud. I ask your pardon, but you know I must obey my husband—why would you bring me all this wine?

Mayor. All under the rose; you shall treat me with a glass; it will make your veins thrill, your cheeks glow, your bosom pant, your heart beat, and your eyes sparkle with love and rapture.

Maud. Lord, Sir, will wine bewitch a body so?

Mayor. Yes, it will: do you know that Love has summoned you before me, as a witch, and by the virtue of my authority, I commit you to those arms!

Maud. O! sure your worship's a little maddish!

Mayor. I am at this time as mad a Magistrate as ever devoured a haunch of venison.

Maud. Nay, now, do not talk that way to me, now, do not, now. [*a great knocking at the door.*]

Tom. [*from without*] Maud! Maud! why have you bolted the door?

Maud. That's my Tom!

Mayor. Where shall I go?

Maud. Oh, lord, if he sees you!

Mayor. I'll go up stairs!

Maud. You must not, indeed, he will go up there!

Mayor. What shall I do? oh, my dear reputation, hide me, hide me some where.

Maud. Suppose you hide in this hamper that brought the wine?

Mayor.

Mayor. Oh, excellent! right woman for invention, faith. *[gets into the hamper.]*

Tom. *[still making a noise at the door]* Why don't you open the door, Maud?

Maud. I'm coming, I'm coming, Tom.

Tom. *[pushes open the door.]* Why the deuce did you bolt the door, Maud? Now I've broke the bolt.

Maud. Because I was alone, and one can't tell what may happen to a body—but what brought you home, Tom?

Tom. Why, grand news.

Maud. News!

Tom. Yes; there's his lordship, the Earl of Mercia, coming to our town—and there is the wedding liveries to be finished—and you are to pay your honours to the bride before she leaves the Mayor's house, and goes back to the castle—I have won the wager, Maud, at the Guy of Warwick.

Maud. Have you?

Tom. I have won it, *tol de rol*—I'm come home half fuddled with joy—I'll now go and see how the cloaths go on——What hamper's that, Maud?

Maud. Oh, that!—aye, that's a hamper of wine that the Mayor desires you to see left safe at home, and delivered to madam his lady.

Tom. Wine!—Oh, I'll carry it immediately, as I'm an officer, I should do the Mayor's business.

Maud. So you should, Tom—for the Mayor is willing enough to—*do your business.*

Tom. I'll see the hamper delivered to none but his lady.

Maud. [*aside*] Egad, you'll trim his worship neatly.

Tom. You are a happy wife to have so clever a husband as I am—such a rare husband, Maud!

Maud. And you have a rare wife of me, if you knew but all——Lord! what good spirits you're come home in, Tom.

Tom. How loving good cheer makes a body!

S O N G.

Tom.—Egad, we had a glorious feast,
 So good in kind, so nicely drest,
 Our liquor too was of the best—I'll tell ye;
 One leg of mutton, two fat geese,
 With beans and bacon, ducks and peas,
 In short we'd every thing to please—the belly.
 The clock struck twelve in merry chime,
 The priest said grace in Saxon rhyme,
 Says I to me, this is no time—for playing:
 The room was full when I came in,
 But soon I napkin'd up my chin,
 With knife and fork I now begin—to lay in.
 The curate, who at such a rate,
 Of dues and tythe-pigs us'd to prate,
 In silence sat behind his plate—a peeping;
 Most churchman like, the vicar too,
 A shepherd to his flock below,
 Like any wolf good mutton now—was deep in.
 We nodded health, for no one spoke,
 The cloth roll'd off, we crack'd a joke,
 And drink the King, and sing & smoke—tobacco.
 Our reck'ning out, they call a whip,
 I steals my hat, and home I trip,
 My pretty Maud, your velvet lip—to smack-o.

Exeunt.

S C E N E,

SCENE, *the Mayor's House.*Emma *asleep.* [*Enter Harold.*]

Har. The people of this town are all running after news—Mobs and Proclamations—it is bold of me to venture here even into the Mayor's house, and a price set upon my head by command of the Earl—Cruel fate! but I will see Emma again, tho' at the risk of my life—Ah! what, my lovely Emma sleeping—sweet emblem of innocence.

Enter Tom with the Hamper.

Tom. There leave the hamper of wine till I find out madam the Mayorefs—where the plague are all the servants? Oh, dear! ah! ah! there is young lady Emma taking a nap after dinner—egad, these great folks eat so heartily of so many dishes—she looks so rosy, and for all the world like a pretty picture—what a charming landscape—I fancy your great ladies never snore—even Maud does not snore much—perhaps she's dreaming—I dreamt once, I should be exalted above the whole town, by the means of a great lady—may be this is my lucky minute; what if I—Oh, dear, I have a great mind—Egad, I will give her a kiss—I will. [*Harold advances and draws his sword, Tom falls on his knees*] I'm dead!

Har. Tom, you are the only person that has seen me enter here, betray me, and here is instant death—assist me, and here is the means of living well. [*Shews a purse.*]

Tom. Sir, I always love to live well, because—because—I am a good Christian.

Har. Take your choice—Gold or steel?

Tom. Gold is a pretty thing, I am out of conceit with steel, since last Monday, when I run the needle into my thumb.

Har. When she wakes, give her this ring, and if she questions, tell her the owner is at hand. [Retires.]

Tom. Yes, Sir, I'll tell her 'tis in the owner's hands.

Har. From thence I may form some idea of my success.

Tom. Madam, a handsome gentleman, [aside] an ill-looking robber, with great civility—[aside] a sword to my throat—said, Sir, be so good to shew that lady this ring—[Har. aside, You villain, you dog.]—Give her this.

Emma. That ring I gave to my benefactor, my dear, my generous William. [Harold appearing] Heavens! what do I hear?

Tom. [going off and peeping] Oh, ho! well, I'll go and carry the hamper to the Mayorefs—Oh, ho!—I suppose so—oh, well—what's that to Tom?—Aye, oh, aye!—Oh, ho! oh, ho! [Exit Tom.]

Har. Madam, if I am so happy as to hold a place in your affections, whilst I acknowledge your condescension, permit me to say, it reflects no dishonour on your choice, for in poor William the peasant, you behold Harold, son of Goodwin, Earl of Kent, and unhappy only in being hated by the father of her he loves.

Emma. Is it possible! are you Harold for whose life the proclamation is out? Oh, heavens! if you are discovered, you are lost, and I miserable.

Har. Charming Emma! that tender anxiety for my safety, rewards a life of exile; but this evening is appointed for the celebration of your nuptials with the Count—this moment the equipage is on the road to convey you away to the castle.

Emma. Oh, heavens! doom'd to a wretch I despise.

Har. Trust to my honour, madam, and I will instantly convey you to my father's court; thus you will avert the impending storm, and there in safety you may determine the fate of him who adores you.

Emma. It would be ungrateful to distrust your sincerity—I resign myself entirely to your protection—free me from this odious match with Count Lewis, and it will be a favour I shall ever acknowledge and esteem as a generous obligation.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *a Room in the Mayor's House.*

Enter Tom with the Hamper.

Tom. Yes; that poor fellow must be some rich man from the money he gave me—there is love—O yes, there is certainly love in the case—well, what's that to Tom? my business is to deliver this wine to the Mayorefs. I am in great favour—she smiles upon me whenever she

she sees me,—now if she should be the great lady who is to exalt me—who knows—here comes the Mayorefs herself.

Enter Mayorefs.

Mayorefs. Not a servant in this house!—all gone, I suppose, to see the young lady Godiva come into town— Oh, good Tom!

Tom. [*aside*] She always calls me good Tom, that's no bad sign,

Mayorefs. What's this, Tom?

Tom. Madam, when I went home, I found my door locked, and bursting it open, my wife Maud got this hamper in care, which his worship the Mayor had told her—to tell me, to fetch it to your ladyship.

Mayorefs. More nonsense of my blockhead of a husband.

Tom. 'Tis no nonsense, madam, because 'tis wine.

Mayorefs. Oh, wine, I suppose, that he has purchased from the French Count.

Tom. It's no purchase, it's a present.

Mayorefs. Oh! a present from the French Count, I suppose—Well, for this trouble, Tom, you shall have the first glass.

Tom. I long to drink your ladyship's health—you are the tulip of Coventry.

Mayorefs. You have a good taste, Tom.

Tom. Taste, madam, I could drink a bottle when you are the toast.

Enter Maud.

Maud. Ay, and you will have a bottle well filled presently.

Mayorefs.

Mayorefs. What brings you here?

Maud. I come to empty the hamper, madam.

Mayorefs. You!

Maud. Yes, madam, for it was last filled at my house.

Tom. So, Maud, you was toping when you locked yourself in? [*Opens the hamper and discovers the Mayor.*] There, madam!

Mayorefs. My husband!

Tom. Egad, this is indeed a big-belly'd bottle!

Mayorefs. What—you have been at your old tricks, I suppose?

Tom. Well done, Maud—Egad, you have hamper'd his worship.

Mayorefs. You are a Right Worshipful Magistrate!

Mayor. [*comes out of the hamper*] So I am, wife—Tom, remember I am the father of you all.

Tom. Yes! and you want to be the father of my children.

Mayor. Come here, wife—come here—Well, Tom, as this was only a frolick, you'll send home the wine.

Tom. Oh, it is at home now!

Mayor. Yes; but you'll send it home to me.

Tom. Oh, no—the devil a drop you get—I'll keep it to drink my wife's virtue, and the like success to your worship's intrigues.

Mayor. Dear wife, forgive this.

FINALE.

PEEPING TOM.

F I N A L E.

Maud. Who would destroy domestic joy,
Be ever sham'd like you, Sir;
Then girls agree to do like me,
Out with each fly seducer.

The deuce may mend, and shame attend
Who thus with supple temper,
Then Master Mayor, pray have a care,
Nor get again into the hamper.

Tom. Well pleas'd to find my wife so kind,
So cunning, and so clever;
The bells shall ring, her praise I'll sing
For ever and for ever. The bells. &c.

END OF ACT I.

A C T II.

S C E N E, *the Street.*

Enter Tom, followed by a Mob.

Tom.

HUZZA! huzza! neighbours, neighbours.
where are you all going?

Mob. Huzza!—to meet the Earl of Mercia,
and lady Godiva!

Tom. Why, neighbours, what will they think
of our town?—let us welcome them in order—
if we must roar, let us roar like men and Chri-
stians—I'll cheer them with a choice chaunt—
and

and then I'll make a fine speech,—and when I'm making the speech—not a grunt from one of you—not a grunt!

Mob. Why, what will you say?

Tom. Why, suppose now you to be the Countess—I desire you to make a low courtsey to me, because you are very civil—now you frown with your under lip more—now curl up your nose—so now, Mr. Countess, take your finger out of your mouth—do, now, settle your diamond necklace—shew your fine ring, and white hand.—

Mob. But, Mr. Tom, as I have got no diamond necklace, won't it do as well to stroke my beard?

Tom. No, no, it won't—did you ever hear of a Countess stroaking her beard?—now, I will make a speech—"May it please your lordship and your ladyship—the great honour you have done us, in coming to our beggarly town—"

Mob. What—Coventry a beggarly town?—why, you deserve a kicking!

Tom. Now, did you ever know a Countess to kick a church-warden?

Enter Mayor.

Mob. No speech, no speech—A speech from the Mayor, to be sure.

Tom. The Mayor's an ignorant man!

Mayor. What's the matter here?

Mob. Here's Tom abusing the whole town.

Mayor. Is he?—Get you gone, all of you—

Tom, you are a very impudent fellow—so,
Tom, I'm an ignorant man. *Tom.*

PEEPING TOM.

Tom. Are you, Sir?

Mayor. And you are an impudent rascal.

Tom. My impudence is for having a wife too pretty for me, and too virtuous for your worship.

S O N G.

Tom. Your worship your wings may clap,
And think yourself a great city cock,
You'll never my Maud entrap,
For she is the hen of a pretty cock.

Your worship, &c.

Have done with your winks and your leers,
For Tom is a Taylor that's knowing, Sir;
He'll trim you himself with his sheers. (Sir.
And then you'll have done with your crowing,
Your worship, &c.

My wife is a white-legged fowl,
Can bill like a thrush or dove in tree;
But never will pair with an owl,
My worshipful Mayor of Coventry.

Your worship, &c.

Mayor. Tom, I discharge you from all public offices—public good demands it.

Tom. The public good!—why—can you forget when you collected the poor's-rate, you lent out the money at three-pence a week for a shilling—and when church-warden, you was detected in putting in a sixpence and taking out half-a-crown.

Mayor. I put in half-a-crown!

Tom. Ay, that was compound.

Mayor. Tom, I discharge you down to a common constable.

Crazy. He is no constable, that office belongs to me!

Mayor.

Mayor. Tom, I supercede you—I must be ready to receive the Earl of Mercia.

Enter the Earl of Mercia, Godiva, and Attendants.

Earl. Mr. Mayor, my daughter has made a long visit at your house?

Mayor. She does my house, my lord, much honour.

Lady Godiva. Has not your fair at Coventry lasted much longer than usual?

Mayor. My lady, in order to compensate for the great honour done us, we have had a greater variety of entertainments than ever was known in Coventry.

Tom. We have, indeed, had great diversions, my lady—Lord, how beautiful she is!

Crazy. Yes, we have had much merry-making.

Earl. Who are you, my old friend?

Crazy. Please your worship—I'm Mayor of Coventry.

Mayor. The devil you are!

Tom. Please your worship, that old gentleman's wits are a little out at the elbows, and tho' my brain is quite new, and I've been so active in every office, yet the Mayor has put him over my head—and he's mad.

Mayor. Crazy there has merit.

Tom. I've done nothing.

Earl. So, then, you are the active officer that has done nothing!

Crazy. I do all myself!

Earl. This same town of Coventry seems to be well governed—if one may judge by the appearance of its Magistrates.

Tom. His lordship seems to be in a plaguy ill-humour—he looks damn'd glum—come—clear up your pipes, and give him a song.

S O N G.

Tom. Your lordship's welcome among us,
Because you are the Peer;
Your ladyship never will wrong us,
Because you're not severe.

Chorus.—This is joyful news,
What citizen will refuse
To stick up their houses with holly?
We'll broach a tub of humming bub,
To welcome home with a rub-a-dub-dub,
So, neighbours, let's all be jolly.

May. At our fair you'll be delighted,
The bells shall ring merrily;
And when, my lord, I'm knighted,
Sir Gregory Goose I'll be.

Chorus.—This is, &c.

Enter Count Lewis.

Count. Emma, my lord, your daughter's fled—gone off—and accompanied by a young peasant—that, I dare say, must be the peasant that rescued her from the Danes; it seems Harold, Earl Goodwin's son, has been lurking about the town.

Earl. [*looking on the Mayor*] Is this your fidelity to me?—since you have joined in the treason, all partake in the punishment—for this offence I amerce your city in a thousand marks, and, by h—ns, the power of man shall not induce

induce me to abate one scruple—see that this is complied with in an hour's notice, or rigour shall enforce my sentence. [*Exit Earl and attendts.*]

Tom. Here's a pretty job!

Crazy. I remember Alfred the Great laid a tax upon horn-combs.

Enter Mayorefs.

Mayorefs. Fine care you have taken of us!

Mayor. Fire, sword and famine is come upon us! O grief—O ruin!

Tom. You see when my lord takes a thing in his head, he says he will do it—and in that case he surely does it—and then it's done.

Mayorefs. We all know that lady Godiva is as sweet-temper'd as her husband is crabbed and crusty—now I will summon all the good-wives in a body, and I will go at their head, and with disheveled hair and streaming eyes, will beseech the lady, to beseech her husband—to take off the tax.

Tom. An excellent thought!

Mayor. I must get the consent of the corporation—I will go summon the livery.—

Mayorefs. Summon the livery! you had better summon the petticoats—

Tom. I'm for the petticoats.

Crazy. And I love the petticoats. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *a Street.*

Enter Emma and Harold.

Emma. What a dilemma!

Har. The city guard being posted, prevented our escape—

Emma.

Emma. When my father knows you are the person that assisted my escape, he will be in such a rage——

Har. A separation from my Emma, alone is a terror for her faithful Harold.

Emma. Was my father but to consider your valour, he would certainly be reconciled.

Har. True, my love, I have bled in my country's cause, and shall again—not the fire of love, nor the frost of age, shall check my spirit in the cause of Britain.

Emma. Oh, do not have an idea of separation! if you could but find a place of safety here for the present——I think this is the house of poor honest Tom, the Taylor, I have seen so often at the Mayor's.

Enter Tom.

Tom. Ay, there they go—what a fine string of them, I did not think there were so many women in Coventry, at least not so many pretty girls in it—I love the pretty girls, because they are generally so handsome——they always snigger at me as they pass; how can they help it, when I cast such sly looks at them?—there they all march in a body—egad, it's a delicate body: and the Mayorefs at their head, she's a fine head—well, if this scheme succeeds, I will get drunk to-night, like a sober citizen, and drink success to the petticoat corporation—Oh, lord, madam Emma, there they are gone up to the lady Godiva.

Emma. You'll not betray me!

Har. Mind, Tom, money or steel.

Tom. No, Sir, I have enough of gold, and keep the sword to defend the lady—you will find shelter in my house, perhaps as good as in a rich man's—for, lord, I am as great a friend to love, as the woman's favourite the fat friar, father Fogarty.

S O N G.

When I was a younker, and liv'd with my dad,
The neighbours all thought me a smart little lad,
My mammy she call'd me a white-headed boy,
Because with the girls I lik'd for to toy,
There was Ciss, Priss, Letty, and Betty, and Doll,
With Meg, Peg, Jenny, and Winny, and Moll:

I flatter their chatter so sprightly and gay,

I tumble 'em, tumble 'em—that's my way.

One fine frosty morning, a-going to school,
Young Moggy I met, and she call'd me a fool,
Her mouth as my primmer, a lesson I took,
I swore it was pretty, and kiss'd the book;
But school, fool, primmer, and trimmer and birch,
And boys for the girls I've left in the lurch:

I flatter, &c.

'Tis very well known I can dance a good jig,
And at cudgels from Robin I won a fat pig,
I wrestle a fall, and a bar I can sling,
And when o'er a flaggon, can sweetly sing;
But pig, jig, wicket, and cricket, and ball,
I'd give up to wrestle with Moggy of all:

I flatter, &c.

[Exit.]

SCENE, a Chamber in Tom's House.

Enter Tom.

Tom. I have a great fancy to know what Maud and the Mayorefs have done—Lord, how I long to know what success they have had, or whether they will forgive the tax—oh, there's Maud come back, I hear her voice.

Maud. [*without*] Oh, madam, I'll only tell my Tom. [*entering*] Oh, Tom, here we have got the young lady Emma in the house—have you seen the Countess?

Tom. I know what we have got—but tell me, shall we get the tax off, you all went, and were you all there?

Maud. Yes, there we went, and we were all admitted to Lady Godiva's presence!

Tom. Oh, God, that was pleasant!

Maud. So it was, Tom—we all fell a crying.

Tom. How did you manage that, Maud—I never saw you cry in all my life.

Maud. I only made believe—then we all fell on our knees, then we got up again.

Tom. Yes, yes; Oh, I see, I see you did!

Maud. Then the Countess she heard our petitions, and she asked my lord to pardon the city—no, said his lordship, that I will not—I have sworn that the power of man shall not persuade me—Yes, but says she, the power of woman may, and I am a woman, says she.

Tom. Oh, she need not have told him that.

Maud. And says her ladyship, I am a good woman, and your wife; and you, as a good husband, ought to do as I bid you.

Tom. She was a little out there.

Maud. Says the Earl, as you are a good woman, I will forgive the tax, only on one condition—what's that? says my lady. It is, says he, only if you will ride thro' the city of Coventry, naked, without a rag of cloaths on.

Tom. What!

Maud.

Maud. Now, he only joked, having no notion she would do it; but she having the good of our city at heart, took him at his word, and is actually now preparing for it.

Tom. Lady Godiva ride a horse-back—all thro' the city, without any—well, if I ever——[*shews strong marks of curiosity.*]

Maud. Now, you are all agog with your nonsensical curiosity.

Tom. I have no curiosity——

Maud. Tom, Tom, our fortune's made, for as the lady Emma has taken shelter in our house——

Tom. Our house—ride—so, so——

Maud. But here's a young peasant in her company——

Tom. Company; then I suppose she will have nothing at all——

Maud. 'Tis very odd, for he seems to have a sight of money.

Tom. Sight of money—such a sight!

Maud. Hang the man, is he grown stupid—what are you thinking of, Tom?

Tom. I was thinking of a side-saddle.

Maud. Was there ever such a fool! but I must go and attend lady Emma, so I will leave you to ride on your side-saddle. [*Exit.*]

Tom. Talk of a coronation! 'tis no more to this—lady Godiva is a procession in herself. I must go in time to procure a good place—shall I ask our Maud to go—no, no, the sight would be lost upon Maud—but I'll go——

Enter the Mayor.

Tom. What brings you here, Sir?

Mayor. Well, Tom, I suppose you've heard?

Tom. Yes, Sir.

Mayor. Lady Godiva, in her progress thro' the city, passes by your house here.

Tom. Gad, Sir, that's lucky, I shall have an opportunity of seeing her nicely.

Mayor. Yes, and you will have an opportunity of hanging in hemp nicely, at your own door—the streets are to be cleared—all the windows and the houses to be fastened up, no person to be seen, on pain of death, of the male kind.

Tom. Me—do you think I would look, Sir?—I wish I could get him out of the house—why what need your worship be in a hurry to go!

Mayor. I am in a hurry to go, Tom.

Tom. It's a fine day abroad, Sir.

Mayor. But every body must stay at home.

Tom. Well, if you will go home, you must—good-bye to you, Sir.

Mayor. What! are you going, Tom?

Tom. Yes, Sir; I wish you a good-bye, Sir, I will not stay in this room, while lady Godiva passes, it commands such a prospect.

Mayor. Gad, that's true, from that window I could have a charming peep, if that fellow was but out of the way. [aside.]

Tom. I'll go down and lock myself in the cellar, to avoid temptation.

Mayor. Do, Tom—that's a good boy, and I'll go home, Tom.

Tom. Good-bye to you, Sir.

Mayor. Good-bye to you, Tom.

Tom. So, you are going home, Sir?

Mayor. Yes, I'm going home, now do you go and lock yourself up in the cellar.

Tom. Yes, I will, Sir—good-bye, Sir.

Mayor. Good-bye, Tom!

Tom. Good-bye, Sir.

Mayor. Good-bye, Tom. [*Exeunt severally.*

Re-enter Mayor. Bell tolls.

Mayor. By this time, lady Godiva's past the cross, all is clear, and foolish Tom has locked himself up in the cellar, and thinks I am gone home—She cannot be far off now—I shall have a charming peep at her from that window. I'll go and look for something to put on this table. [*Exit.*

Enter Tom.

Tom. So by this time his worship's at home, curst troublesome old hound, and lady Godiva must be at hand—I think I hear her horse's feet—the clinking of their hoofs is far sweeter than a haut-boy. [*Drags a stool and puts it on the table, and gets up*] There, there she's turning the corner.

Enter Mayor.

Mayor. I can find nothing—I'll try to reach the window upon my tip-toes, tho' I break my neck for it—[*in striving to get up, he catches Tom in his arms*] Oh, you villain, have I caught you peeping!

Tom. Sir, I was only going to take in the cock chaffinch.

Mayor. Come down, I'll have you hanged—I came here only on the look-out. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.

S C E N E, *a Street.*

Enter Tom, followed by the Earl, Mayorefs, and Attendants.

Earl. You fhall be hanged, Tom.

Tom. Then your lordfhip muft get me another neck, for this is engaged already—

Earl. How, firrah! did you not know it was infant death!

Tom. True, my lord; but I thought it was no harm!

Enter Maud.

Maud. Oh, my dear, what's the matter! it is all along this wicked Mayor, he wants to make a widow of me—it would be for the public good if he was hanged inftead of my husband—

Earl. Then we fhould leave his wife here a forrowful widow.

Mayorefs. Oh, my lord, I fhould not mind my private forrors for the public good——

Earl. So, then, Mr. Mayor, all this was to forward your defigns upon the young woman—if this culprit here, will give up my daughter, his life fhall be faved.

Tom. Then I have a dull chance, my lord; but, my lord, tho' I am but a poor fellow, the richeft jewel in your lordfhip's coronet could not make me betray a perfon, after once giving him the protection of my roof.

Earl. See him to execution—I will try him further.

Tom. No mercy, my lord!

Earl.

Earl. Yes, if you can produce Harold in your place, that may save your life.

Enter Harold and Emma.

Har. Then save his life, and take mine. I am Harold, but now the husband of your unhappy daughter.

Earl. Disobedient child—of all men upon earth, is this your wretched choice?

Emma. My choice—my pride.

Earl. I would sooner have bestowed you on that peasant that rescued you from the Danes, for his valour at least has a claim upon my gratitude.

Emma. Then let Harold have that claim; he was that peasant, the protector of my life and honour.

Earl. I see now that my prejudice to Earl Goodwin, has blinded me to his son's peculiar virtues, and what you have saved, take for your reward.

Enter the Count.

Count. My lord, your daughter I claim according to your promise.

Earl. No, he's unworthy of a lady's love, who has not courage to protect it.

Tom. So here I stand all this while with the rope about my neck.

Mayor. I must do my duty—bring in the constables.

Earl. 'Tis your duty to resign an office to which you are a disgrace—Here I grant Tom a full pardon for his adherence to his word, and in your place I appoint him Mayor of Coventry.

Mayor. What! Peeping Tom!

Tom. Hold your tongue, you dog, or I'll put you in the stocks.

Crazy. Whoever is Mayor, I'll be Church-Warden.

Earl. I believe I have been too severe upon your city, but since it has produced one honest man, I relinquish my claims.

Crazy. Yes, I'm an honest man, and you have found me out.

Tom. Then I hope our friends will be equally indulgent, and every man that loves a fine woman, will pardon PEEPING TOM OF COVENTRY.

F I N A L E.

Harold. Let ev'ry care and tumult cease,
Bands of love unite us,
Kind friendship, joy, and lasting peace,
Ever shall delight us.

Maud. I wish you joy of your disgrace,
Let his wife alone, Sir;
For since by her you've lost your place,
Better kiss your own, Sir.

Mayor. I've brought things to a pretty pass,
By my own gallanting,
Tho' late a Mayor—I'm now an ass;
This is my gala-ganting.

Crazy. Why, what a deuce, is all this rout?
Cease your idle fingering!
Or by this hand, I'll put you out,
And set the bells a ringing.

Tom. Tho' you have, as poet's say,
Rods in pickle sleeping;
Forgive poor Tom, of Coventry,
And pardon for his peeping.

F I N I S,



